

Politics · CBC Investigates

Hacked convoy data shows more than half of donations came from U.S.

Canadians donated more cash than Americans to the protest, however

[Elizabeth Thompson](#), [Roberto Rocha](#), [Albert Leung](#) · CBC News ·

Posted: Feb 14, 2022 4:03 PM ET | Last Updated: February 15



Signs of support for the convoy protest in Ottawa on Feb. 9. A hack of the crowdfunding site GiveSendGo revealed the names and details of people who donated money to the protest. (Lars Hagberg/Reuters)

Although Canadians gave more money than Americans, more than half of the donations to the convoy protest made through the crowdfunding website GiveSendGo came from the United States, an analysis of hacked data from the site reveals.

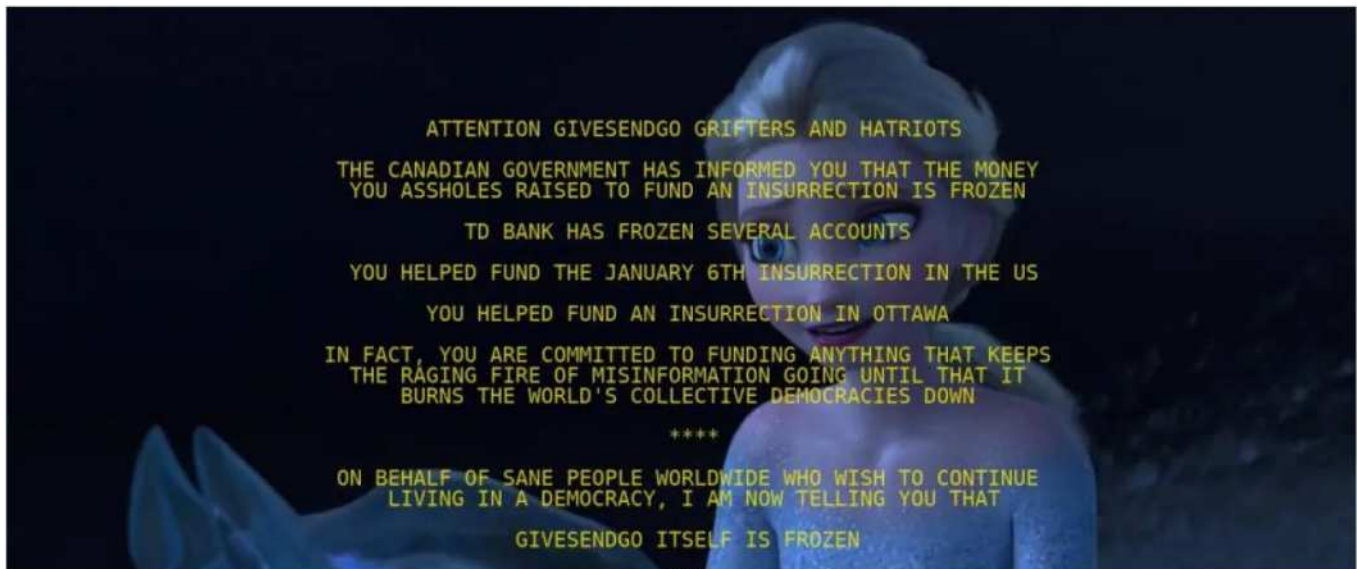
The data — hacked illegally and released publicly late Sunday evening — sheds light on the identity of thousands of donors to the crowdfunding campaign.

A check by CBC News found that multiple names in the hacked data set correspond to names, dates and donation amounts collected independently by CBC News as the donations rolled in to GiveSendGo.

The data, which includes the home countries of donors, reveals that 55.7 per cent of the 92,844 donations made public came from donors in the United States, while just 39 per cent came from donors located in Canada.

But while the U.S. donations included a number of large contributions — in some cases from names matching the names of donors to former U.S. president Donald Trump's campaigns — Canadians actually gave more money in total to the convoy protest.

GiveSendGo IS NOW FROZEN!



[Raw Donation Data for Freedom Convoy 2022 \(CSV Format\)](#)

A screenshot taken Sunday night of a page that visitors to the GiveSendGo crowdfunding site were routed to. A link on the page appeared to lead to data identifying people who donated money to the organizers of the

convoy protests against vaccine mandates in Canada. (Screenshot/GiveSendGo.com)

Of the \$8.4 million US in donations detailed in the data, \$4.3 million US — or 52.5 per cent of the total — came from Canada, while \$3.6 million US (44.2 per cent) came from the U.S.

Other countries don't even come close. Great Britain provided the third-largest number of donors — 1,831 donations totalling \$77,065.

The last donation listed in the data set was made the evening of Feb. 10.

Users who tried to access GiveSendGo.com on Sunday night were immediately rerouted to the domain GiveSendGone.wtf. There, a video of the Disney movie *Frozen* began playing, with a scrolling message addressing "GiveSendGo grifters and hatriots." A link to the hacked donor data appeared below the video.

It was up for several hours before GiveSendGo regained control of its domain and posted a message on its main page saying the site was offline for "maintenance and server upgrades."

GiveSendGo broke its silence Tuesday morning as the convoy crowdfunding page returned online.

The company said that when its site was attacked, its security team shut it down "to prevent further illegal actions." It said no credit card numbers were leaked and no money was stolen.

"We are in a battle," the company tweeted. "We didn't expect it to be easy. This has not caused us to be afraid. Instead, it has made it even more evident that we cannot back down."



Thanks for visiting GiveSendGo.com

We are currently offline for maintenance and server upgrades. We are

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/convoy-protest-donations-data-1.6351292>

3/7

continuing to improve our platform to ensure it will be the best fundraising platform on the internet. Thank you for your patience and support. Please check back later.

A message that appeared on the GiveSendGo.com website after the link to the hacked data was removed. (GiveSendGo.com)

Law doesn't cover donations to political protests

The money flowing into the protest exposed a gap in Canada's federal political financing rules. Those rules prohibit people who aren't Canadian citizens or permanent residents from donating to Canadian politicians or political parties — but they are silent on donations to political protests by those who aren't Canadian.

The protest has seen donations worth millions of dollars coming from people who chose to remain anonymous.

- [Federal government invokes Emergencies Act for first time ever in response to protests, blockades](#)
- [Critics call for new rules for online fundraisers after protest convoy takes anonymous donations](#)

The popular GoFundMe crowdfunding platform collected more than \$10 million from more than 120,000 donations before it shut the fundraising campaign down and announced that all donations would be refunded. An analysis by CBC News found that at least one-third of those donations were listed publicly as anonymous or under obviously fictitious names.

When GoFundMe shut down the convoy fundraiser, protest organizers pivoted to the Christian crowdfunding site GiveSendGo, which by Feb 12 had raised \$9.05 million US from 101,919 donations. In their comments, many donors indicated that they had donated to the GoFundMe campaign.

Restraining order against release of funds

At least 41 per cent of the publicly listed contributions in the GiveSendGo data are anonymous. Many of those listed among the named donations appear to use fake names.

Money for the convoy protest also has been donated through cryptocurrency fundraising campaigns. Much of that money is anonymous and untraceable. Truckers participating in the protests have also been receiving cash donations on the street from people they don't know.



Someone with a helmet labelled 'Boosterman' and a mock syringe gun takes part in the convoy protest in downtown Ottawa Sunday. (Alexander Behne/CBC)

In a news release issued Sunday, protest organizers said none of the money raised for the convoy protest has been released to the organizers.

While GoFundMe initially released \$1 million and GiveSendGo's system sends donations directly to the bank account designated by organizers of a fundraiser, the Ontario government obtained a restraining order last week freezing the funds.

On Friday, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau told reporters that half of the donations to the convoy protest on some platforms were coming from the United States. Sources over the weekend told CBC News that the information had come from GoFundMe, but the company has yet to confirm that information.

WATCH | More than half of donations to convoy protest came from U.S.:**More than half of convoy donations came from U.S., hacked data shows**

8 months ago | 2:01

A CBC News analysis of hacked data about those who donated to the protest convoys through GiveSendGo found more than half of the donations came from the U.S. It's raising concern about foreign funding of political activity.

On Monday, Finance Minister Chrystia Freeland announced the government would adopt new measures to cover crowdfunding sites, which currently are not obliged to report to FINTRAC, Canada's money laundering and terrorist-financing watchdog.

"We are broadening the scope of Canada's anti-money laundering and terrorist-financing rules so that they cover crowdfunding platforms and the payment service providers they use," Freeland told reporters. "These changes cover all forms of transactions, including digital assets such as cryptocurrencies.

"The illegal blockades have highlighted the fact that crowdfunding platforms and some of the payment service providers they use are not fully captured under the Proceeds of Crime and Terrorist Financing Act."

The government is expected to make public more details of the changes Tuesday.

WATCH | Freeland announces new regulations for crowdfunding sites:



Crowdfunding platforms must now register with FINTRAC

8 months ago | 1:39

Deputy Prime Minister Chrystia Freeland announces new regulations to crowdfunding sites and their payment service providers as part of the deployment of the Emergency Act.

[CBC's Journalistic Standards and Practices](#) | [About CBC News](#)

[Corrections and clarifications](#) | [Submit a news tip](#) | [Report error](#) ▼

©2022 CBC/Radio-Canada. All rights reserved.

Visitez [Radio-Canada.ca](https://radio-canada.ca)